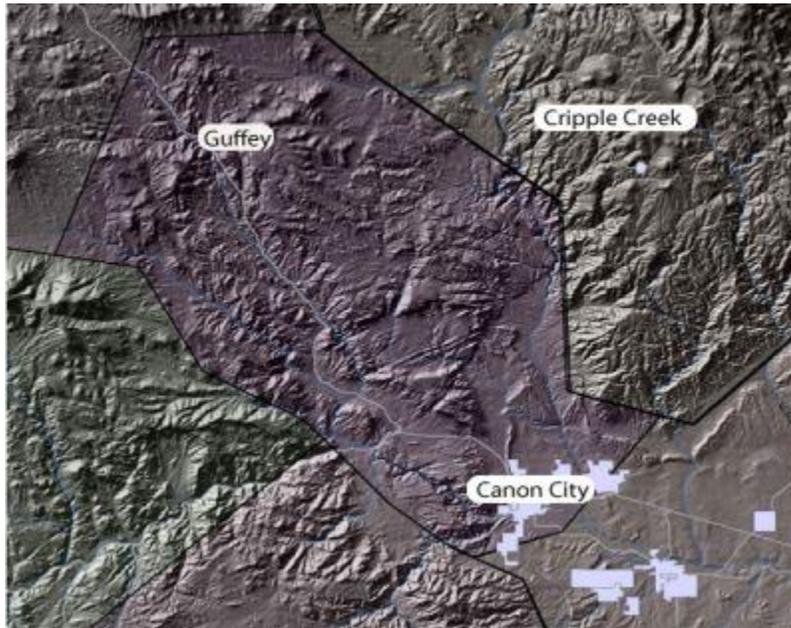


Canon City Basin



Geology

The Cañon City Basin is a small structural basin that exposes rocks dating back to the Pre-Cambrian period and is located in south-central Colorado between the Wet Mountains to the south, the Front Range to the north, and the high plains in the east. During the first part of the Paleozoic era, the area experienced stable periods of low topographic relief and shallow seaways followed by the uplift of the Ancestral Rocky Mountains in the Late Paleozoic. During the Mesozoic era, the Ancestral Rocky Mountains eroded rapidly to form a low upland, but by the end of the Jurassic period, sediment had entirely covered the remnant topographic features of the Ancestral Rocky Mountains, and as most of the North American mid-continent had subsided, the Western Interior Seaway flooded the area. Near the end of the Cretaceous, a new mountain-building episode known as the Laramide orogeny resulted from changing plate movements. This new episode resulted in parts of the area being uplifted. Periods of volcanic activity followed causing the blanketing and burial of much of the erosional surface in the region with volcanic deposits. Finally, during the Pleistocene epoch, the mountains to the west of the basin became covered with glaciers, and gravel deposits are now found in most of the valleys in the region.

Paleo highlights: Ordovician sites found at Indian Springs and in the Harding Formation; Morrison Formation in Garden Park; and Cretaceous-aged dinosaur footprints at Skyline Drive.

Mineral Resources: Sand and Gravel, Oil, Gas, Coal, Placer Mining – gold, industrial minerals